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REPORT OF STREET COMMITTEE

At the June 26, 1936 meeting of the City Planning Commission, the Street Committee made reports on the proposed Front Avenue artery and the proposed diagonal from Front and Arthur Street to be a part of the "foothills" route. The recommendation in one report was that the location of the proposed diagonal from Front and Arthur to 18th and Market be approved. This location would cross Fourth Avenue between Caruthers and Sherman, connect with the existing diagonal through the old Reservoir Block, use the small park block south of Clifton Street as right-of-way, and extend to 14th and Hall at their present intersection.

In regard to the Front Avenue artery, it was recommended that the plan which provides a connection between Front, at Caruthers, and S. W. Water Avenue at a point some 200 feet north of Lincoln, abuts the harbor line at Morrison, passes east of the Public Market under the Morrison Bridge approach, and returns to Front Avenue by a short diagonal near Morrison and Alder Streets, be approved.

The Commission returned both reports to the Committee with instructions to get traffic data from the State Highway Commission, and ascertain if such data would make other recommendations more desirable.

In regard to the Front Avenue artery, it should be remembered that any action which is taken at this time is in reality a temporary one. Inevitably the Morrison Bridge and the Hawthorne Bridge will be rebuilt, the former at a comparatively early date, the latter may not be necessary for 25 or 30 years. When either of these bridges is rebuilt any previous arrangement of underpasses and approaches is practically certain to be changed. If it is desired to obtain the benefit of an underpass at the west end of these bridges from now until the Hawthorne Bridge is rebuilt then a temporary location such as the one above must be selected.

The staff of the Commission has endeavored to secure traffic counts from the State Highway Commission which might bear on the location under discussion. The results have not been particularly instructive. The only relevant data is contained in a letter to the Planning Commission from Mr. U. L. Upson of the Metropolitan Association, in which it is stated that the latest traffic counts show that the east and west bridges carry a smaller amount of the traffic coming into the business district from the east side than the north bridges and the south bridge.

Since traffic entering the central district by the Broadway, Steel, Burnside, or the Ross Island Bridges, naturally continues its course by way of north and south avenues, it is obvious that these avenues will carry the major traffic load in the central area. It is therefore a fortunate circumstance

that these avenues are wider than the east and west streets. It is also evident that every effort should be made to encourage a uniform distribution of the traffic load on the north and south avenues.

Traffic counts would give numerical expression to a condition that can be easily perceived. There is a very heavy north and south movement on S. W. Fourth Avenue due to its being the direct connection to Barbur Boulevard. Barbur Boulevard--Fourth Avenue--is rapidly developing to the point where it will be the most heavily used artery leading into the business district. There is also a very heavy movement crossing the Ross Island Bridge, a large part of which has a destination west of S. W. Fourth Avenue. This means a large number of vehicles desire to use the same street intersection at the same time, some desiring to go north or south, and some to go east or west. For this reason, the vital point in any plan to get a more uniform distribution of traffic on the north and south avenues of the west side district, is a grade separation of S. W. Barbur Boulevard traffic from Ross Island Bridge traffic. In this connection it should be noted that this is a grade separation where a "clover-leaf" is not desirable. The use of S. W. Fourth Avenue by traffic to and from the Ross Island bridge and S. W. Macadam, should be discouraged in every way possible. Therefore the grade separation of the Fourth Avenue and the Ross Island Bridge artery should be a simple grade separation with no "clover-leaf" or interchange facilities.

If Duniway Park had not been preempted for recreational use, there is much to be said for the economy and efficiency of the proposal to project Arthur Street under the Fourth Avenue fill, and build a highway curving to the northwest and joining S. W. Sixth Avenue between Sheridan and Caruthers.

The 1936 Park Report proposes the acquirement of 60 acres of the river front, south of Ross Island Bridge, as a recreational area for South Portland. This would be so far superior to Duniway Park that it would not seem at all reasonable to expect any active opposition to the Duniway Park roadway if the whole program were explained to the citizens.

It would seem reasonable therefore to make a thorough cost comparison of the two possibilities before final selection. If by building a highway through Duniway Park enough right-of-way cost can be saved to purchase the proposed waterfront recreational area south of Ross Island Bridge, certainly the South Portland district would be greatly benefitted in every way.

However, the location of the connecting road from Second and Arthur to Sixth and Grant is not important, save from a financial standpoint. From the standpoint of traffic, either location can afford the needed traffic distribution. The criterion of approval should be, -does the plan provide for an immediate grade separation at the S. W. Fourth Avenue crossing? If it does not, then there is no reason to build it at this time. A diagonal street crossing Fourth Avenue at grade would cause more traffic delays than the present arrangement.